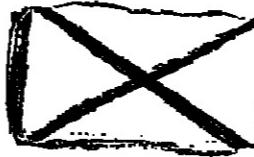


German hit in attack on Nile cruiser

ASSIUT (AP) — A German woman was shot in the neck Friday by gunmen who attacked a Nile cruise boat carrying holidaymakers officials in Assiut, 32 kilometres south of Cairo, said police did not know how many assailants fired on the boat but that they used machineguns. The boat, which had 33 German tourists among its passengers, was the second boat in a two-boat convoy travelling north from Luxor to Cairo. Its windows were smashed, but the accompanying cruiser was not hit. It was the first cruise boat attacked since Sept. 18. Hospital spokesman reported the woman was in critical condition. Jürgen Steltzer, spokesman at the German embassy, said police guarding the boat returned fire, but there was no word on whether any of the attackers was hit. Mr. Steltzer said he understood nobody else was harmed on the boat. He said he had not been able to confirm the woman's name.



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Israelis bombard in south Lebanon

RASHAYA (AP) — Israeli troops blasted Lebanese guerrillas making a fresh attempt to infiltrate an Israeli-occupied enclave in South Lebanon and shelled their suspected bases early Friday, security sources said. It was the third failed infiltration into the border strip since last Friday's massacre in Hebron. The sources said guerrillas of the Iran-backed Hezbollah tried to move into the Israeli-occupied territory around midnight (2200 GMT) Thursday. Israeli troops spotted the infiltrators and blasted them with tank fire, said the sources.

Kurds bomb Iraqi pipeline in Turkey

DIYARBAKIR (R) — Rebel Kurds in southeast Turkey bombed a blockaded pipeline full of Iraqi crude oil in the fourth such attack in the past six weeks, officials said on Friday. The blast caused fire but no casualties. Members of the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) attacked the pipeline between Cizre and Idil towns, near the Iraqi border, on Thursday, the officials said. The fire was put out and there was no loss of oil from the pipeline, they said. The 986-kilometre pipeline, which runs from the Iraqi oilfields of Kirkuk to Turkey's southern coast, has not been used since August 1990, when Ankara shut it down under a U.N. trade embargo imposed on Baghdad for its invasion of Kuwait. When operational the pipeline earns money for Turkey. About four million barrels of crude oil are trapped in the pipe and officials say it should be emptied to prevent corrosion.

Norwegian questioned for Rushdie threat

OSLO (AP) — Police questioned and released the head of a Muslim organisation in Norway who publicly threatened Friday to try to kill British writer Salman Rushdie if he comes to a conference on freedom of expression. A day earlier, the national writers' association invited Mr. Rushdie and other writers who have been exposed to death threats to a Sept. 21-23 conference in the west coast city of Stavanger. "If I get hold of weapons and if I have the opportunity of getting to him — then I won't give him up," said Ibrahim Yildiz, president of the Muslim association of Rogaland in western Norway. His comments were broadcast on radio by NRK Rogaland. The national news agency, NTB, said police in Stavanger brought Yildiz in for questioning, then released him without charge.

Columbia blasts off

CAPE CANAVERAL (AP) — After a one-day weather delay, Columbia thundered towards space Friday with five astronauts on a two-week science mission that could break the shuttle endurance record. Columbia soared into a clear sky at 8:53 a.m. EST (1353 GMT), right on time. It was an ideal morning for launch. Thursday's lift-off attempt was called off the day before, hours before fuelling, because high wind was predicted. The forecasts proved true. The shuttle is supposed to spend 13 days and 23 hours in orbit, just an hour shy of the longest shuttle mission, flown by Columbia last October. The crew is hoping for a landing delay — just one extra orbit will do to break the record.

Indian police arrest Pakistani agents

NEW DELHI (AP) — Police arrested six suspects, including four Pakistanis, accused of planning acts of "terrorism" in India. New Delhi's police chief said Friday. Also arrested Wednesday and Thursday were a Bangladeshi and an Indian, and police seized a stock of explosives and grenades, said M.B. Kaushal, the police commander. The alleged conspirators possessed computer floppy discs with plans to blow up important buildings and shrines, and instructions on the use of weapons, he told a news conference. Mr. Kaushal claimed the suspects were trained by the Inter-Services Intelligence, Pakistan's foreign intelligence wing which India blames for training and arming Muslim separatists in the disputed state of Kashmir.

Israeli troops, settlers kill four Palestinians

NABLUS, occupied West Bank (Agencies) — Israeli troops shot dead two Palestinians during clashes on Friday in a Palestinian refugee camp in the occupied West Bank, a local hospital said.

The deaths brought to four the number of Arabs killed in violence in the occupied territories on Friday.

Earlier Friday, Jewish settlers killed a Palestinian and troops shot dead another in the occupied territories as the bloodletting spawned by the Hebron mosque massacre based into its second week with no end in sight.

But Israeli security forces, deploying in strength, smothered expected trouble in Jerusalem — even briefly banning Jews from the western wall, in an unprecedented move to avoid clashes with angry Arab worshippers.

The army said three Palestinian assailants stabbed two Israelis, one an immigrant from India, at the Gaza Strip settlement of Gush Katif. The Israelis shot one Palestinian dead and wounded another.

Arab sources said a 17-year-old Palestinian, believed to belong to the Islamic Jihad faction, was shot dead in Gaza City when he stabbed a soldier outside a mosque.

Arab sources said a 24-year-old Palestinian was shot in the head and killed by troops during clashes in the Balata re-

fugee camp in Nablus.

The trouble erupted after rampaging settlers smashed a dozen Arab-owned cars during the night.

In Hebron, masked Palestinians, some firing marbles from slingshots, defied a curfew to clash with troops in barricade-clogged streets choking with clouds of tear-gas and black smoke from burning tyres.

The fighting centred around the domed Ali Baba Mosque as the army tried to stop Muslims going out to pray.

Palestinian factions urged people to break the curfew to pray at the Ibrahim Mosque, site of the massacre, and called on the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to halt negotiations with Israel until all settlers have been disarmed and removed from the territories.

About 20,000 Arabs were allowed to pray at Al Aqsa, a fraction of the number which usually turn out. Most were middle-aged or elderly.

Sheikh Mohammad Kafrawi, who delivered the sermon at Al Aqsa, told worshippers: "We're waiting for more massacres because there are so many Baruchs running around freely."

He appealed to worshippers not to cause trouble, saying: "We don't need more bloodshed and more martyrs. We've

Young Muslims were barred from Al Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third holiest shrine, and Jews were moved away from the western wall for an hour.

That is the first time it has been blocked off and the move drew protests from ultra-orthodox Jewish groups.

The precautions were aimed at preventing Arabs at Al Aqsa atop the walled mount from stoning Jews below at the wall, which is generally crowded on the eve of the Jewish Sabbath.

After last Friday's massacre, Palestinians near Al Aqsa stoned Jewish worshippers. In October 1990, police killed 17 Palestinians in clashes around Al Aqsa after they stoned Jews.

The Islamic Waqf organisation, which looks after Muslim shrines in the complex, protested the Israeli measures.

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(Continued on page 5)

All 4 defendants found guilty in New York blast

NEW YORK (Agencies) — A jury Friday found people guilty of bombing the World Trade Centre last year.

The verdict came in the fifth day of deliberations by the jury of eight women and four men. They began deliberations on Feb. 23, just three days before the first anniversary of the explosion which left six people dead and injured more than 1,000.

The defendants in the case were Mohammad Salameh, Nidal Ayyad, Mahmoud Abu Halima and Ahmad Ajaj. Each was charged with 11 counts. The conspiracy charge was the main allegation in the indictment, although it carries a maximum sentence of only five years in prison, other related charges could send the men to prison for life.

They said Mr. Ayyad, 26, a chemist, ordered chemicals for the bomb and sent messages to news organisations afterward that the motive was to protest U.S. aid to Israel.

Witnesses said Mr. Abu Halima, 34, was frequently in the apartment where the bomb was built, while Ahmad Ajaj, 28, allegedly provided bomb-making expertise. Mr. Ajaj

was in jail on a false-passport conviction when the blast happened.

Mr. Ajaj lived in Houston; the rest in New Jersey suburbs of New York City.

Defence attorneys contended that the government twisted the evidence to spin a web of conspiracy trapping the defendants.

While some defence lawyers would not even concede it was a bomb that devastated the trade centre, Mr. Salameh's lawyer, Robert Precht, surprisingly acknowledged during closing arguments that there was a bombing conspiracy and that his client was involved.

Mr. Precht insisted Mr. Salameh was an unwitting dupe of the alleged Ringleader, Ramzi Yousef, a fugitive, and therefore was innocent.

Mr. Salameh wrote a letter to Judge Kevin Duffy, saying "I object to everything Mr. Precht said in his summation." But Mr. Precht stood by his

(Continued on page 5)

U.N. says Serbs still raping, murdering Muslims in Bosnia

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — Despite a successful ceasefire around Sarajevo, uniformed Serbs are raping, robbing and murdering Muslims in the north Bosnian town of Banja Luka, a U.N. relief official said on Friday.

"Banja Luka ... is one of the most grim places in Bosnia even though there's no shelling there," said Kris Janowski, spokesman for the Sarajevo office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

"There's a continuing campaign of intimidation, quite brutal intimidation — sometimes murder — against Muslims there."

With 55 per cent of the area's pre-war population and a tight grip on its major military installations, Serbs took control of Banja Luka in the first hours of Bosnia's 23-month ethnic war that has brought accusations of atrocities against all sides.

Serbs have driven Muslims from their homes ever since in a Serb policy dubbed "ethnic cleansing" to create wholly

Serb territory, U.N. aides say. Mr. Janowski cited three recent examples from a UNHCR report prepared in Banja Luka:

A 72-year-old Muslim man slashed with knives until he was barely recognisable died in hospital in Banja Luka last month. All are now seeking UNHCR assistance in leaving the country.

Asked who the assailants were, Mr. Janowski replied: "We understand that they are either part of some sort of a militia or the Serb military. The authorities tell us all the time they have nothing to do with it, that these people are some sort of criminals, but none of these cases have ever been followed by the authorities, no one has ever been punished.

"We assume that this is all done with the knowledge and at least the silent consent of the authorities otherwise they would do something to stop it, but they do absolutely nothing."

Every mosque in Banja Luka, including some of inter-

(Continued on page 5)



An Israeli soldier searches a Palestinian boy going to pray at Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque (AFP photo)

Shaath: U.S. backs armed observers in occupied lands

WASHINGTON (Agencies)

Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) envoy Nabil Shaath Friday said the United Nations was near agreement, with U.S. backing, on a proposal for an armed international presence in the Israeli-occupied territories.

While he said discussions on "modalities and timing" for such a presence were still underway, Dr. Shaath was adamant that the presence would involve armed "security people."

Dr. Shaath said Secretary of State Warren Christopher supported the idea of stationing a U.N. force on the West Bank to protect Palestinians against Jewish residents.

However, Dr. Shaath said the PLO was not ready to reopen negotiations over self-rule with Israel. He said a U.N. resolution encompassing Palestinian demands had not been worked out yet.

The resolution, including parts of it that are supported by the United States, includes an international presence in the occupied territories, Dr. Shaath said after a 90-minute meeting with Mr. Christopher.

He said there was no decision yet on the composition of the force. But dismissing any suggestion only civilians might be involved, Dr. Shaath said, "They have to be security people."

(Continued on page 5)

Zulu party to register for polls

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Zulu nationalists who vehemently opposed South Africa's first all-race election reversed themselves Friday and said they would register for the April vote.

But Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) set conditions for participating in the election, and a leading pro-apartheid white group refused to join its black ally in signing up for the vote.

Less than eight weeks remain until the April 26-28 vote, which will formally end apartheid by including the black majority for the first time.

The deadline for registering for the election was midnight (2200 GMT) Friday.

By agreeing to register, Inkatha signalled it believed international mediation could work out differences with the African National Congress (ANC) and President F.W. de Klerk's government on the powers of regional governments in a new constitution.

Mr. Buthelezi and ANC leader Nelson Mandela met this week and agreed on international mediation in return for Inkatha's registering for the election.

Inkatha's central committee endorsed that agreement Friday, but said any participation in the election beyond registration depended on the mediation forging acceptable solutions on Inkatha's demand for an autonomous Zulu state.

It also said mediators must make sure all participants in the election have equal opportunity to campaign if the voting dates remain as scheduled.

(Continued on page 5)

Greece tries to narrow Israel-PLO differences

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Palestinian negotiator Faisal Husseini said Friday that stalled Middle East peace talks will not resume until Israel gives "positive answers" to Palestinian demands for better protection following the Hebron mosque massacre.

Mr. Husseini spoke to reporters after an hour-long meeting with Foreign Minister Carolos Papoulias of Greece, which currently holds the European Union (EU) presidency.

Mr. Papoulias also met Friday with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

"All this exchange of ideas is aimed at overcoming the crisis," Mr. Papoulias said.

He said an international force to protect the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip was among ideas under discussion.

But he did not say if Israel has softened its opposition to any outside military presence. A move the Israelis consider diminishes their authority in the occupied territories.

Mr. Peres said after meeting Mr. Papoulias: "We're ready to consider every possible means to enhance the security and the feeling of safety to all concerned."

But Mr. Peres termed as "speculation" Israeli media reports that the United States wants further steps taken to rein in Jewish settlers.

The Feb. 25 massacre in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron was carried out by a Jewish settler, Baruch Goldstein, who was beaten to death by survivors.

Israel Radio said U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher reportedly told PLO envoy Nabil Shaath in

Bahrain dismisses Qatari approach

THE HAGUE (R) — Bahrain on Friday dismissed Qatar's allegations that it was flexing its military muscle in the disputed Hawar Islands and said it would not be dragged before the International Court of Justice as Qatar's captive. In hearings before the United Nations court, Bahrain rejected Qatar's claim to sovereignty over the Hawar Islands and the reefs of Dibal and Jaradah. But it declined to discuss the accusations that it had recently brought heavy artillery and military vehicles into Hawar and concentrated solely on the 50-year-old sovereignty dispute which Qatar submitted to the court in July 1991. Bahrain's Minister for Legal Affairs Hussain Mohammad Al Baharna said Qatar's unilateral application to the court was a ploy to gain an unfair advantage. "Qatar intends to set up the case in a way that suits it ... and control the range of issues on which the court will decide," he said. "Bahrain will be happy to come to the court, but not as the captive of Qatar." Tension between the two Gulf states flared into a military confrontation in 1966 but was later cooled by Saudi mediation.

France calls for talks on settlements

PARIS (Agencies) — French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe urged Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on Friday to negotiate the future of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, leading to their possible "regrouping."

"We believe the issue of the settlements and of their eventual regrouping should be the object of negotiations between the parties," Mr. Juppe told reporters after meeting top PLO official Yasser Arafat.

An accord signed in Washington on Sept. 13 between Israel and the PLO said the future of the settlements would only come to the negotiating table three years after Palestinian self-rule began in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Mr. Juppe's statement appeared to indicate Paris no longer gave the full backing it offered so far to the accord following the massacre seven days ago by a Jewish settler of at least 60 Palestinians praying in the West Bank town of Hebron.

Defence Minister Francois Leotard, who separately met Mr. Arafat, offered the help of France's gendarmerie (para-military police) to train Palestinian policemen, trained so far in Egypt and Jordan.

Mr. Juppe repeated that France favoured the "neutralisation of all known extremists who wanted to kill peace" and that he was concerned about the weapons carried by settlers when they moved about the occupied territories.

He said Paris favoured the supervision of security measures in the occupied territories by international observers serving under the United Nations.

Middle East News

Hamas rejects Arafat appeal as theatrics, presses call for jihad

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, on Friday described a hollow call by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to join hands in his campaign to negotiate the status of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories with Israel and ensure the protection of the Palestinians living there.

"Arafat's call is simple theatrics with no substance," said Ibrahim Ghosheh, the Amman-based spokesman for Hamas. "He is trying to circumvent Hamas' demand for shelving the so-called peace talks with Israel," Mr. Ghosheh told the Jordan times.

Mr. Ghosheh was referring to a Feb. 28 letter from Mr. Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), to Musa Abu Marzuk, head of the political department of Hamas.

The PLO leader's letter, which came in response to a Hamas message calling on him to abandon the peace talks in the wake of the Feb. 25 massacre of Muslim worshippers by one or more Jewish settlers at a Hebron mosque, "did not touch the essence of Hamas' position," Mr. Ghosheh said.

Furthermore, by sending an envoy to Washington in response to a call by U.S. President Bill Clinton on Arabs and Israelis to resume the peace talks, Mr. Arafat "has reaffirmed that he has no intention of moving from the course of surrender he has adopted," Mr. Ghosheh said.

In a Feb. 28 open appeal to the rank of file of Fateh, the mainstream PLO group founded by Mr. Arafat, Hamas said:

"We appeal to our brothers in Fateh to join hands and escalate the intifada and holy war against the enemy."

The (Hebron massacre) in which hundreds of our people died confirms the righteousness of resistance and armed struggle, and exposes the Zionists' claims that they wish to coexist in peace with our people," it said.

In his message to Hamas, Mr. Arafat said: "It is the hour of unity and solidarity and uniting ranks and not differences and divisions."

"This unity is most needed when we are fighting one of our fiercest battles to find a radical and comprehensive solution to the settlements and the disarming of settlers and securing international protection for our people," he wrote.

According to Mr. Ghosheh, "this is not a language of reconciliation as we had proposed. We wanted Arafat to abandon the negotiations with Israel and return to armed struggle to liberate our lands."

Mr. Ghosheh said Mr. Arafat "is ignoring the streets of Amman, Damascus, Cairo and the occupied territories which have erupted in protest against negotiations with Israel."

"Arafat no longer represents



Ibrahim Ghosheh

Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), whose secretary-general, George Habash, did not join the council because of ill-health and nominated his deputy.

For the first time after the Sept. 13 Israeli-PLO accord was signed, Hamas has threatened Palestinians from the occupied territories who are members of the delegation negotiating peace with Israel.

"We demand that the Oslo team announce their immediate withdrawal from the negotiations with Israel," the group said in an open letter addressed to the Palestinians living in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. The reference to Oslo was to the site where Israeli and PLO negotiators worked out in secret the autonomy accord which was formally signed in Washington in September.

"We will not allow a handful of us (Palestinians) to continue negotiations with those murderers at the expense of the Palestinian people."

Ghali: U.N. observers could calm West Bank

UNITED NATION (USA) — Secretary General Boutros Ghali has said that even some type of U.N. civilian observers in the occupied territories help ease tensions.

Speaking with journalists after a Security Council debate on the Hebron massacre, the secretary general said that the idea of international observers came from "a long conversation I had with the prime minister of Israel."

He said he believes a United Nations presence "may help to defuse the tension. We have done this in South Africa and both Nelson Mandela and President F.W. de Klerk recognised that the presence of the United Nations — which was very symbolic — had helped to defuse the tension."

The secretary general stressed that any pause in the peace effort is to the benefit of the extremists. "They are able to exploit delay, pointing out to the people on the ground that the present circumstances are not causing any progress, and thus urging people there to turn to more extreme measures," the secretary said.

"I do hope that after a short period of time... in which there is a cooling of tempers, that the parties will get back to the table and promptly finish the implementation agreement," he said.

Later in the day Mr. Christopher told reporters that he would be meeting today with Dr. Shasha, the special envoy of Mr. Arafat. "We'll be discussing ways that the parties can resume the negotiations," he said.

The secretary noted that the Palestinians need a greater sense of security than they presently have, and "I'm sure we'll be discussing ways to do that. I'm glad that he's coming at this time so we'll have an opportunity to explore the matters that you can only do face-to-face."

Mr. Christopher said he expects to be in touch with Mr. Arafat before leaving Washington Friday on an Asian trip.

Mr. Christopher said he talked with Rabin March 1, and "I have absolute confidence that he will carry out the commitments that he has made."

Mr. Rabin has "never even come close to violating a commitment that he made to me or

to our successful conclusion."

Mr. Clinton has called Rabin, King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to discuss methods of keeping the peace process viable.

Myers said the president, in each of the telephone calls, "is asking everybody to keep working toward peace, to participate in the process."

Secretary of State Warren Christopher, asked at a Senate hearing Wednesday about the Israeli government's reaction to the Hebron killing, said the United States hopes and expects that Israel will move aggressively to implement the steps outlined by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

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Clinton optimistic Mideast peace talks will resume

WASHINGTON (USA) — Halting the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks would reward the "madman" he gunned down more than 50 worshippers in a mosque in Hebron, President Clinton said Thursday.

Expressing optimism that the talks will resume despite the enormous political pressures on Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and especially on Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat, Mr. Clinton said "the surest way to hand a victory to the madman who killed all the Palestinians in the mosque" is to fail to resume the talks scheduled to take place in Washington this week.

White House Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers said Arafat is sending Nabil Shaath to Washington to discuss timing for resumption of the discussions on implementing the declaration of principles signed by Israel and the PLO last year at the White House.

After the Israeli gunman fired into Muslim services at the mosque, Mr. Clinton summoned negotiators from both sides to Washington, urging them to keep talking until implementation was agreed upon, but the ensuing unrest has delayed the discussions, which had been scheduled to begin March 2.

At issue is the transfer of authority from Israeli occupation forces in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jenin to Palestinian civil rule. Among the issues outstanding after several rounds of talks in Egypt, according to U.S. officials, are the economic relationship between Israel and the new entity, the role of Palestinian police, and control of extra points.

Mr. Clinton told questioners that allowing the talks to founder would hand a victory

to extremists in Israel and among Palestinians. "I think we can get them back on track," Mr. Clinton said of the discussions. "If the peace talks don't get back on track, then we are rewarding the damage and the death wreaked by the extremists. We don't want to do that."

The president said Mr. Rabin has made "a good beginning" for resumption of the talks. He said he understands the "very deep and profound" ethnic and religious difficulties which fuel continuation of conflict in the Mideast and elsewhere, but he cited the March 1 federation agreement among Croatia, the Bosnian government and the Bosnian Croats as an example of what can be done when "we just keep working at these things and do our best to try to bring them to a successful conclusion."

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Israeli officials threaten to act against Orient House

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli officials said Friday the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) headquarters in Jerusalem has been served notice that it owes nearly \$300,000 in back taxes, which the right-wing mayor vowed to collect.

The PLO centre, known as Orient House, is where Palestinians meet to coordinate their strategy on peace talks and where visiting foreign dignitaries are received.

It also serves as a defacto city hall for Palestinians, who make up 150,000 of the city's population of 564,000.

The municipality of Jerusalem turned to them to pay all their debts as they turn to all those who have unpaid bills, and there are many who are in arrears. We understand the Orient House will pay," said Tirza Frenkel, spokeswoman for the municipality.

PLO officials were not available for comment. But the PLO's top official, Faisal Husseini, warned against any tax raid by police, saying the building contained sensitive documents.

"Why should they be exempted?" Mr. Olmert said. "If anyone on the east side of Jerusalem doesn't pay, we will find a way to enforce it."

Mr. Olmert would not say if he would seek a court order or ask police to act on the tax matter.

By Jamal Halaby
The Associated Press

ZARQA — The family of Bassam Reyati, one of two Jordanians arrested after the attack on a van full of Hasidic Jews in New York, describe him as "a diligent kid" who is more interested in making something of himself in life."

Bassam's cousin, Salah Kurdi, concurred.

"I have been in constant touch with Bassam ever since he arrived in the United States eight years ago," said Mr. Kurdi, 33, a U.S. resident who is visiting Jordan.

"He is a sweet boy who always liked to help people and never encouraged violence or hatred against anybody," Mr. Kurdi said.

"He worked for me for six months in 1987, and he was an example of a diligent kid who wanted to succeed and make money," said Mr. Kurdi, who owns a contracting firm in Chicago.

Mr. Kurdi said he never considered Bassam a devout Muslim.

"He used to pray once in a blue moon," Mr. Kurdi said. "He's just the kind of a man who is interested in making more money, better business and better life. He never discussed any politics with me," Mr. Kurdi said.

Bassam's brother, Mohammad, 26, said Bassam entered the United States on a tourist visa in 1986 and later changed it to a student visa. He said Bassam entered an aviation school in Texas but could not finish his course because of financial problems.

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U.S. says Syria protecting its Jews against threats

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Syrian government is taking unspecified action to protect the country's dwindling Jewish community against a death threat, the State Department said Thursday.

The threat that Jewish blood would be spilled at the end of Ramadan was contained in a pamphlet two American Jewish groups brought to the department's attention.

Department officials checked with the U.S. embassy in Damascus and were informed Syrian authorities were aware of the threat and "had taken actions to protect Jewish residents," the department said in an announcement.

According to the Jewish organisations, the letter described the Jews as criminals and in an apparent reference to the attack by a Jewish extremist on a mosque in Hebron Feb. 25, called Jews cowards who "shoot bullets on the victims when they are praying."

Officials said the first report from the embassy did not explain what the government was doing in behalf of its Jewish citizens.

The Council of Presidents of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations said the pamphlets were distributed by the Syrian Muslim Party of Justice.

State Department officials said they were not aware of such an organisation.

There are about 1,000 Jews in Syria. Most have requested and received exit permits from the government. President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher had interceded in their behalf with President Hafez Al Assad and Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharza in December and January.

The threat that Jewish blood would be spilled at the end of Ramadan was contained in a pamphlet two American Jewish groups brought to the department's attention.

Department officials checked with the U.S. embassy in Damascus and were informed Syrian authorities were aware of the threat and "had taken actions to protect Jewish residents," the department said in an announcement.

According to the Jewish organisations, the letter described the Jews as criminals and in an apparent reference to the attack by a Jewish extremist on a mosque in Hebron Feb. 25, called Jews cowards who "shoot bullets on the victims when they are praying."

Officials said the first report from the embassy did not explain what the government was doing in behalf of its Jewish citizens.

The Council of Presidents of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations said the pamphlets were distributed by the Syrian Muslim Party of Justice.

State Department officials said they were not aware of such an organisation.

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FRIDAY PRAYERS: His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan perform Friday prayers at Al Tabqa Mosque. Friday's sermon was delivered by the Armed Forces mufti. The mufti said the fasting month of Ramadan is a symbol of the unity of the nation and he called on Muslims to observe the teachings of Islam. Also attending the prayer were Their Royal

Highnesses Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein, Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, the King's military secretary, and Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad, as well as Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the prime minister, speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, the Chief Chamberlain and senior civil and military officials.

Special interest panel organises measures to protest sales tax

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A special committee lobbying against the proposed sales tax draft law has brought together eight political parties, various professional unions and thousands of citizens in a campaign to pressure deputies into rejecting the controversial legislation.

The committee has already started measures of protest against the draft legislation, including organising a sit-in in front of Parliament when deputies debate the draft law, according to Deputy Khalil Haddadin, the committee spokesman.

"We are organising a mass protest outside Parliament on the day the draft law is to be debated," Mr. Haddadin told the Jordan Times Thursday. He said parties involved in the campaign have been active in raising public awareness about the importance of the issue and are collecting signatures to a petition demanding that the new tax be rejected.

According to the committee, the proposed tax law does not serve the interest of the country or its citizens and threatens Jordan's national industries.

The committee calls for encouraging investment in new local industries, which would contribute to reducing unemployment. If the proposed draft law is endorsed, said Mr. Haddadin, such industries would be negatively affected.

He added that the committee, like the government,

would like to see a reduction in the budget deficit. But he said that could only be achieved by minimising government expenditure and maximising income through increasing customs on imported luxury items used by a limited sector of society which can afford such items. "This gives more room for local industry to prosper," added the deputy.

President of the Finance Committee at the Lower House of Parliament Ali Abul Ragheb said Friday that many sectors of society have "major reservations" about the proposed tax.

Mr. Abul Ragheb said that the finance committee has held extensive meetings with different political and popular groups, Chamber of Commerce officials, professional unions and the Consumer Protection Society to hear out their views on the draft law, which the House referred to the committee on Feb. 16.

He told the Jordan Times that the committee will make "major modifications" to the law before it sends it back to the House with its recommendations. Mr. Abul Ragheb said the committee will take into consideration "the requirements" of the government as well as economic sector.

"The committee will come up with moderate and acceptable (recommendations) to all sectors of society," said Mr. Abul Ragheb who expected the draft legislation to be sent back to the House early this week.

Mr. Haddadin expressed faith in the deputies' ability to recognise what serves the interest of Jordan and its citizens."

Many observers believe that the House will introduce minor amendments to the draft law before eventually approving it despite the strong opposition that Islamist and leftist deputies are expected to raise.

The draft legislation, which is a requirement of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)-orchestrated social and economic reform programme, would replace the Consumption Tax which Deputy Abdul Karim Kabariti called "a sword-to-the-hands of the government."

The Consumption Tax was introduced in 1992, but the government argues many negative aspects appeared when it was implemented. It said the new tax would remove those "negative elements."

Minister of Finance Sami Gammoh presented the draft law to the House on Feb. 16 as an "important part of the economic reform programme" which, he said, would enable the country "to receive foreign aid, maintain the stability of the dinar and build the Kingdom's foreign currency reserves."

But the government's justification did little to ease the opposition of Islamic Action Front (IAF) and other deputies who said the draft law would increase the tax burden and raise the cost of living for limited income people.

Customs legislation amendments to simplify procedures

By Ziad Al Shilleh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Legislation Bureau at the Prime Ministry is currently discussing amendments to the 1983 Provisional Customs Law No. 16 which are aimed at facilitating and simplifying customs procedures in line with related laws and the latest economic developments in Jordan and the region, according to Director General of the Customs Department Mohammad Al Jantia.

In an interview with Al Rai Arabic daily and the Jordan Times, Mr. Jamal said the proposed amendments seek to distinguish between customs and smuggling violations and to correct some outdated provisions.

Under the amendments, fines for violations of customs laws will be reduced from 200 per cent and 300 per cent of the customs duties to 25 per cent or 100 per cent of the fees. Fines for inaccuracies in export statements will be reduced from 100 per cent and 400 per cent to a minimum of 100 per cent and a maximum 200 per cent of the customs fees.

On goods used for purposes other than those for which they were imported, fines will be reduced to no less than 25 per cent and no more than 100 per cent of the customs duties payable. Fines on sales of goods for which duties were not paid, pending the settlement of their status, or exchanging or disposing of them illegally will be reduced to a minimum of 100 per cent and a maximum of 200 per cent.

Delay fines will be increased to speed up customs clearance.

Fines on temporary administration will be reduced and fines for inaccuracies in the manifest will be reduced to a minimum of 10 per cent and a maximum of 100 per cent of the duties, down from 100 to 300 per cent of the value of goods and duties together.

The fine on imports exempt from customs or subject to reduced tariffs, which are used for purposes other than those for which they were imported, will be decreased from 100-400 per cent to 25 per cent of the fees.

Fines on smuggled goods will be increased from 300 per cent to 600 per cent of the fees.

Vehicles used to transport smuggled goods will be fined no more than 50 per cent of the value of the smuggled items, provided that such fines do not exceed the value of the vehicle itself.

The amendments authorise the director general of the Customs Department or his designate to dismiss smuggling cases not exceeding JD 250. The amendments also delegates some of the powers of the Minister of Finance to the director general of customs

Heavy rains expected — Abanda

AMMAN (Petra) — An atmospheric depression over Jordan and the eastern Mediterranean region is expected to bring heavy rains and a drop in temperature starting Sunday, according to Ali Abanda, director of the Department of Meteorology.

The depression, centred over the Black Sea, was moving steadily towards the eastern Mediterranean accompanied by a cold front which will cause high winds and rain, said Dr. Abanda.

Rainfall last month reached 70 per cent of the annual average in some regions of the Kingdom, said Dr. Abanda, adding that a few governorates in the south registered above average rates. The rainfall in the northern regions as well as in Amman, Mafraq and Zarqa governorates was below the annual average, Dr. Abanda said. He said that thus far this winter most of the rain fell in the Karak, Tafleah and Ma'an governorates.

Al Rabbeh town near Karak received the highest cumulative amount of rainfall with 321.3 millimetres, accounting for 127 per cent of the total annual average up to March 1, 1994.

The lowest cumulative amount, he said, fell in Jafr which so far received 82.7 millimetres this winter.

Visiting Greek minister warns that peace talks are vulnerable to collapse

By Nermene Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Greek Foreign Minister Karolous Papoulias, on a Middle East tour representing the European Union (EU), warned that Jewish and Islamist extremists are on the rise and urged support for the Israeli government and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat.

In a meeting with Jordanian officials the top Greek diplomat, who left Amman to Israel at the end of his two-day visit here Thursday evening, warned that the two sides are in vulnerable positions following the massacre of Palestinian worshippers by a Jewish settler in Hebron. He said the situation could lead to the collapse of the Middle East peace process.

"The Minister said that there was no escape from saving Mr. Arafat politically," Foreign Ministry Secret-

ary General Nayef Hadid told the Jordan Times in an interview.

"He also underlined that vulnerability of the Labour government in Israel and said that if we do not cooperate, it will weaken and maybe collapse," Mr. Hadid said.

"He said he believed that the Hebron massacre was a gift from the skies to fundamentalists," Mr. Hadid quoted Mr. Papoulias as saying.

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"The Greek official met with His Majesty King Hussein, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan as well as several top politicians including Lower House of Parliament

Speaker Taher Al Masri. Mr. Papoulias also told officials that the European Union of nations would also want to see "the disarming of Jewish settlers."

Mr. Hadid said that Mr. Papoulias had told Jordanian officials that EU member countries "were worried" by the Hebron massacre and believe that the Middle East area is passing through "difficult times."

According to sources, Mr. Papoulias underlined the importance of the democratic process in the Kingdom and expressed concern that economic conditions have to improve in order to consolidate democracy.

"International presence is a basic condition and disarming the Jewish settlers is another condition," the official news agency (Petra) quoted the Greek diplomat as saying.

"The minister said that all

effort has to be extended to finding a solution because there is no other option," Mr. Hadid quoted Mr. Papoulias as saying.

According to Petra, Mr. Papoulias delivered to King Hussein written messages from the EU and Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou. He also carried a verbal message from Greece's President Constantine Karamanlis.

According to sources, Mr. Papoulias underlined the importance of the democratic process in the Kingdom and expressed concern that economic conditions have to improve in order to consolidate democracy.

"He said he believed that the embargo has to be lifted on the Red Sea port of Aqaba," as a condition to improving the economic situation in the Kingdom, one of the sources told the Jordan Times.

Massacre victim recovering in Amman

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas Friday visited Mohammad Yousef Abu Halawa, one of the Palestinians who were wounded when Israeli settlers opened fire on Palestinian worshippers at Ibrahim Mosque, last Friday, killing more than 60 persons and injuring about 300. Dr. Malhas said that Mr. Abu Halawa was admitted to Al Hussein Medical Centre after a Cabinet decision to allow all those who were injured in the Hebron massacre to be treated at Jordanian hospitals at the expense of the Ministry of Health. Al Hussein Medical Centre Director Adel Shureikh said Mr. Abu Halawa was in stable condition, although the injury to his lower limbs and upper left arm were serious.

Mr. Abu Halawa described the massacre at the mosque as shocking and blamed the slaughter on Israeli soldiers.

He said before the massacre he noticed that for the first time the number of Israeli soldiers at the entrances to the mosque were not large.

"At the inspection point at the Mosque, Muslim worship-



Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas (third from right) Friday visits Hebron massacre victim Mohammad Yousef Abu Halawa (Petra photo)

pes were not searched which made the numbers increase, because when they see Israeli soldiers moving around the mosque, they head to other mosques," he said. "What happened that morning was incredible... I heard a barrage of fire... and I was the first to be shot... I felt my back bleeding then I passed out," Mr. Abu Halawa said.

Merchants complain draft tenancy law is unfair

Special to the Jordan Times

work is not completed within three years.

The merchants, who claimed they represent hundreds of downtown traders, said that the article gives landlords the right to evict tenants whenever they wished since most downtown buildings are over 40 years old. They added that the draft legislation does not differentiate between commercial and residential properties, and merchants could incur tremendous losses if Article 9 is applied.

"It takes years for merchants to build a good reputation and establish business relations, all of which can be shattered if property owners decide to kick tenants out," one of the merchants told the Jordan Times.

The traders said that all their appeals to deputies have been neglected although copies of a petition signed by hundreds of their colleagues have been sent to all lawmakers and members of the Upper House of Parliament.

The merchants added that not only business owners could be harmed by this article of the draft law, but other citizens as well because it would result in unemployment for many who work for them.

They said the compensation for which tenants are entitled would not make up for the loss of business clients and credibility, pointing to key money that they would have to pay in order to rent new properties in commercial areas.

The choice of returning to the property after three years of eviction or receiving compensation is tricky and benefits only the landlords whose new lease rates would probably be ten times higher than the previous ones, said the merchants in an interview with the Jordan Times.

The traders said the same article of the draft legislation gives property owners the green light to demolish buildings that "our great grandfathers built and which constitute a very important part of our heritage."

The House, which approved 10 articles of the draft law after heated debates that extended over three sessions, is expected to endorse the 20-article draft legislation Sunday.

33 Iranian envoys have left Jordan, official says

By Nermene Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A total of 33 Iranian diplomats have slipped out of the country quietly in compliance with a Jordanian request that Tehran reduce its diplomatic representation here to a number compatible with Amman's presence in the Iranian capital.

As part of the agreement between Amman and Tehran, the last of the 33 diplomats left at the end of February and the previously bustling embassy, according to the secretary general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has been reduced to four diplomats, including the ambassador, four administrators, a driver and a cook.

Nayef Hadid told the Jordan Times that the Kingdom believed it was necessary to request the reduction because the amendments authorise the director general of the Customs Department or his designate to dismiss smuggling cases not exceeding JD 250. The amendments also delegates some of the powers of the Minister of Finance to the director general of customs

the number of Iranian diplomats in Jordan was not compatible with Amman's two diplomats in Tehran.

Sources had said that Mr. Istanbuli was tied up for several hours while his assailants searched his house and stole some of its contents.

Jordanian officials at the time expressed their suspicion that the assailants; of Mr. Istanbuli belonged to one of the security wings in Iran and demanded that the Iranian government investigate the case.

Officials, however, had said that Jordanian ambassador to Iran Yassin Istanbuli was attacked at his home in Tehran and his assailants searched his house and stole some of its contents in August of that year.

It was Tehran's refusal to apologise officially over the mistreatment of the Jordanian

vities by Iranian diplomats to infiltrate cultural and research centres in the Kingdom and distribute leaflets targeting Gulf regimes.

Officials contacted by the Jordan Times would not confirm these accusations but one source said that the embassy had been able to win support among private sector businessmen here and that these influential traders contacted the Foreign Ministry on behalf of the embassy when it first became known that they were being asked to reduce their staff.

Jordan and Iran restored diplomatic relations in 1990 after a decade of strained relations caused by Amman's support of Iraq in the 1980-88 war. Iran reopened its embassy in March 1991 and appointed the first ambassador in 13 years in October 1993.

Save water.... every drop counts!

Jordan Times

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Chairman of the Board of Directors:

MARMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:

MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:

GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,

University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 6671716, 6701414

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Faximile: 661242

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Parking in space

IT IS a common scene nowadays to see cars being not only double parked on our streets but also triple parked, or simply parked anywhere. Some who shippers on Fridays, for example, view their right and duty to pray as a licence to block traffic. In retrospect, the fault lies mainly with the construction of places of worship, be they mosques or churches, where no adequate parking facilities are provided in the first place. People are often forced to park illegally since there are no spaces available for legal parking. What exacerbates the problem is either the absence of traffic police on busy days of prayers to control the severe parking situation, or the policemen's reluctance to act against violators, which can be understood but not condoned. It would seem that the Traffic Department could do a lot more in areas where there are no built-in facilities for public parking.

At least double and triple parking could be prevented in areas where they occur with impunity.

That impeded traffic could wreak havoc in emergency cases is well-known to all sides. Imagine if fire breaks out in a giant mosque or church and Civil Defence teams find no easy access to the fire-stricken building. In such a worse-case scenario, what might start out to be a controllable crisis could develop in a matter of seconds into a catastrophe engulfing a whole block of buildings and streets. Casualties could run into the hundreds, and panic could strike the capital like it did when the Safeway fire broke out.

One effective way to deal with this problem is to develop and enforce appropriate building codes according to which public places cannot be constructed without being supplied first with suitable parking facilities. Issuing licences for the construction of mosques and churches, not to mention other high-rise buildings, should be made contingent on the construction of basement parking areas big enough to cope with the potential parking problem. There is in fact legislation to this effect in the books, but it is not always enforced, and when it is, the end result is some ugly structures where cars are parked in ground-level floors rather than hidden underground. What is worse, in many cases, is that space allocated for parking in shopping centres being built around town is usually occupied by employees working at the centre itself. The public, or potential customers of banks and shops located in that centre, cannot use the parking space. They end up cruising the streets for long periods of time in search of a place in which they can leave their automobiles while attending their chores.

The intensifying problem of parking in the capital calls for a new approach encompassing zoning codes, licensing procedures and more effective traffic rules. Till that approach is formulated and adopted, driving and parking in Amman would continue to be a nightmare for most.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I daily said that the terrorist who killed the 63 worshippers at the Al Ibrahimi Mosque was encouraged to do so by world community's passive attitude towards the atrocities committed against the Iraqi, the Somalis and the Bosnian civilians. The paper said that with the killing of the Palestinians, the starvation of the Iraqis and the continued atrocities against the Muslims in Bosnia, the United States and its strategic ally, the Jewish state, are trying to peddle a sort of peace that can only serve their own interests and not world peace and security. By refusing to send peacekeeping troops to Palestine, the United Nations and the world community at large are opening the door for more massacres at the hand of the Israeli soldiers and settlers and, encouraging the Israeli leaders to remain adamant in their position at the peace negotiations, said the paper. The killing of the Palestinian worshippers and the continued atrocities against the Palestinian people are not the making of individual terrorists but rather a well orchestrated plot to annihilate the people of Palestine to ensure the perpetuation of Israeli occupation, added the daily. It said that the stationing of U.N. observers in the occupied territories can by no means provide protection to the defenceless Palestinian people.

THERE IS no doubt that Washington's invitation to the PLO and the Israeli government to resume talks in the United States was part of an American way of containing the Arab masses' anger at the barbaric crime committed by the Zionists at Al Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, said Sawt Al Shaab daily.

By Dr. Moussa Keilani

Will Rabin take the bull by its horn and remove settlements?

THE FEB. 25 massacre of Palestinians by a Jewish settler or settlers in a mosque in the occupied West Bank has served as more than a simple reminder to the political leaders of Israel that there cannot be any lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict as long as Jewish settlements remain in the occupied territories. The killings underlined the fact that the West Bank and Gaza Strip will remain under perpetual tension and a fuseless timebomb ready to explode if settlers, armed to the teeth, are free to roam around and enforce their kind of law.

The presence of never-say-die extremist, radical, hardline settlers (or "ultranationalists" as some call them) although Israeli "nationalism" has little to do with their choice to remain in subsidised housing units in the occupied lands) is not new. It has been a feature of the Palestinian land since 1967. They were very much there when the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel signed their groundbreaking autonomy accord on Sept. 13, 1993.

But the Hebron massacre underlined the ill-founded hopes that Palestinian autonomy could take hold under the present conditions and prove to be a success, paving the way for mutual Palestinian-Israeli confidence and setting the ground for "final status" negotiations to address the root causes of the conflict.

Beyond that, and more importantly, the Hebron slaughter has cut deep into Palestinian and Arab support for the process that was launched with the signing of the September accord and rendered the PLO unable to proceed in its autonomy negotiations with Israel.

By extension, the other Arab parties in the peace process cannot and will not move either as they indicated last week when they walked out of the Washington bilaterals. And hence the conclusion that no matter how anyone looks at it, the peace process is indeed deadlocked. Any further move forward depends on a mutually acceptable arrangement vis-a-vis the settlers and settlements and iron-clad guarantees that the Palestinians in the occupied territories will not be exposed to Israeli terrorism, state-sponsored or otherwise.

That is the Arab and Palestinian side of the affair. Equally significant is the fact that the Hebron carnage has ironically offered Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres exactly the right card they were looking for in their search for a justifiable ground to press the case against the settlers.

Indeed, such a conclusion is based on an assumption that Mr. Rabin and Mr. Peres are sincere and honest in their

efforts to find an equitable, comprehensive, durable and just settlement to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. But in the absence of alternatives, the mainstream Arab thinking has no choice but to go along with the theory that public statements by Mr. Rabin and Mr. Peres are politically faced, and that within themselves they are really interested in a just solution to the Palestinian problem.

No doubt, any Israeli politician, from any side of the political spectrum regardless of inclinations for a just peace, should know that the settlements always posed a major hurdle in any move towards settling the Palestinian problem. But the issue for those who wanted a just peace had always been how to go about addressing it without undermining their political fortunes.

But the Hebron massacre underlined the ill-founded hopes that Palestinian autonomy could take hold under the present conditions and prove to be a success, paving the way for mutual Palestinian-Israeli confidence and setting the ground for "final status" negotiations to address the root causes of the conflict.

Now Mr. Rabin and company have a strong card to press against Likudniks and other rightwingers for a crackdown on the settlers. What remains unclear is how they are going to handle the card.

For all purposes of public consumption, Mr. Rabin and likeminded Israeli leaders have ruled out any dismantling of the settlements or including the issue of settlements in the autonomy negotiations.

But, armed with the knowledge that any just peace now depends on the shape and nature of settlements in the occupied lands, they have a golden chance to really take the bull by its horns and prove it not only to the Arabs and Palestinians but also to the international community that they

Jordanian Perspective

mean business.

Such an approach will serve several distinct purposes:

— Removing one of the major hurdles that have plagued any effort for a just and lasting peace in the region.

— Storing up the waning support for the peace process among the Palestinians, whether in the occupied territories or outside;

— Settling the dilemma of the PLO leadership, which wants to press ahead with the peace process but is unable to do so because of Palestinian opposition getting increased momentum in the hardline campaign against the autonomy agreement; and

— Solving the problem of the other Arab parties, which, despite their commitment to a negotiated peace with Israel, are unable to move.

The Jordanian-initiated suspension of the latest round of bilateral talks is not a tactical move. The Kingdom feels as much pain and anguish over the Hebron massacre as anyone else, and any argument that its suspension of the talks with Israel came as an expression of solidarity with the PLO stand will only be half-truth. Of particular mention here is the fact that Jordan has been on the forefront of the Arabs for decades to repeatedly warn that Israeli settlements in the occupied territories pose a major problem in any effort for Arab-Israeli peace. The Kingdom's stand, in the days immediately prior to the startling disclosure of the secret Israel-PLO accord worked out in Oslo, was that the issue of settlements should be immediately negotiated as part of any substantial Arab-Israeli peace talks.

We hope Mr. Rabin and his Labour-led government, which has always been bogged down over its preoccupation with Israeli public opinion, would move swiftly to contain the threat that the Jewish settlers and their settlements pose to the peace process.

For once, a majority among the Israelis, as opinion polls indicate, feel that settlers are indeed a major hurdle towards achieving the tranquillity and peace they all aspire for, and this gives relative freedom to the government to implement measures to contain the extremists. Any delay in adopting concrete action, much beyond the token disarming of some 100 or so settlers which does not serve any real purpose, would only undermine Israeli public opinion and make it harder for any concerted measure to eliminate the first and foremost problem in moving towards a solution based on "land for peace."

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Mideast peace impossible if settlements are not removed

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah



Palestinians to co-exist with the Jewish settlements during or after the end of the autonomy rule in Palestine.

The writer said that the Hebron massacre leaves no question about the expected confrontations between the Palestinians and the Jews in Palestine.

Fahd Al Fanek expressed the view that the Israeli armed forces were part of the plot in Al Ibrahimi Mosque since the crime bears the mark of the earlier massacres carried out by the terrorists led by Menachem Begin and others since 1948. The writer said that the shell that exploded in the middle of Sarajevo moved the NATO alliance to take action and protect the Bosnians, but the massacre in Hebron went unheeded by this world community.

His views were echoed by Al Dustour columnist Saleh Al Qallab who said that the PLO should put an end to its negotiations with the Israelis and withdraw its recognition of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. The writer said that the Palestinians should unite their ranks and escalate their struggle for a complete withdrawal and a lasting peace. He further urged the Arab regimes to suspend their negotiations with the Israelis and be ready for a long war with the common enemy.

Mahmoud Rimawi, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, said that the Oslo deal should be amended to allow for an immediate discussion of Jewish settlers between the PLO and Israel. He said postponing the discussion of settlements until the end of the five-year autonomy rule is a mistake and the PLO should demand a final solution in this matter immediately.

Backing these views, Sultan Al Hattab said in Al Ra'i that there is no chance for voicing condemnations and crying over their dead. The writer said deplored the mas-

sacre and demonstrating in support of the Palestinians are not the right tools for backing the oppressed people. He called for practical steps at the government and the popular levels to help provide protection to the Palestinian people and to enhance their steadfastness.

Salamah Ekour, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab, said that the PLO leadership has failed in its quest to end the occupation and so it has opened the door for the Israelis to pursue their atrocities and commit massacres. He said that the PLO should refer the efforts to end the occupation to Egypt and Jordan which he claimed, are better qualified to regain the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israel continues to commit crimes against the Arabs in Palestine in the name of or under the cover of working for peace with the Arab states, said Munir Razzaz, a columnist in Al Dustour. He said that the massacre committed in Hebron was the latest link in a long series of crimes which prove beyond doubt that peace with Israel is an imaginary thing that can never materialise.

A columnist in Al Dustour called on the concerned authorities in Jordan to take steps towards implementing a national strategy on combatting drug addiction in the Kingdom. Mohammad Daoud said that despite police efforts and the measures to combat drug addiction and trafficking the number of dealers and addicts have been growing lately, especially among the youth. The writer said that the

police are not enough to handle this grave issue and other concerned authorities, especially the Ministry of Education, are called on to give a hand to stem drug abuse from the country.

Critics give 'Slick Willie' a new label — he's Reaganesque

THEY STILL call him "Slick Willie," and seldom miss an opportunity to criticise his policies or attack his personal character.

Yet to their own surprise and frustration, some of Bill Clinton's Republican critics are applying another label to the President these days:

They say he is "Reaganesque."

What they mean is not that Mr. Clinton has adopted former President Reagan's conservative ideology but that he has the "Great Communicator's" seeming ability to deflect political gravity.

Despite a drumbeat of controversy over his private conduct, the president has risen markedly in the public opinion polls. And, despite outspoken congressional opposition from Democrats as well as Republicans to key proposals such as health care reform. Mr. Clinton's foes no longer discount his capacity for an effective counterattack.

"A lesser politician," said Republican pollster Richard B. Wirthlin, would have "crashed and burned a long time ago." Mr. Wirthlin, a close adviser to Mr. Reagan while he was president, says that while he disagrees with Mr. Clinton on most major issues, he is "a superb politician."

Mr. Clinton's standing in the polls can be attributed partly to a rebounding economy. Also, many Americans who viewed him as a loser after his early setbacks in Congress have begun to change their minds so that they would not impede traffic or obstruct other activities that require attention during the day. The writer said that the Greater Amman Municipality, which wants to avoid further traffic congestions in Amman, should give the idea of garbage collection at night some thought.

Fahd Al Fanek warned the public that failure to impose the sales tax would bring about serious consequences to the country's economy. He said that the implementation of the sales tax draft law would mean that Jordan would not be able to reduce its external debts or get new loans needed for socio-economic development. He said that the sales tax, which was agreed on with the International Monetary Fund, is part of an overall economic restructuring programme benefiting the economy and the Jordanian people in the long run.

The writer said that the war waged by some people against the sales tax law is in fact directed against the country's economic and political future.

On crime, for example, Mr. Clinton has irritated some liberals and stirred indignation among conservatives by championing the "three strikes-and-you're-out" proposal for convicted felons and other hardened criminals that were once the almost-exclusive property of the Grand Old Party (GOP).

He also maintains an optimistic, upbeat attitude in public, even in the face of setbacks, mistakes and nega-

tive news stories. Americans tend to find that a likable quality in a president, political strategists agree.

Most recent polls show Mr. Clinton with relatively strong approval ratings, somewhere above 50 per cent, although much of his support is soft.

Next fall's congressional elections will inevitably be read as a referendum on his performance. And he faces all this with at least two questions hanging over his head:

Character: The recurrent stories of Mr. Clinton's extra-marital sexual exploits do not fit easily with traditional ideals of what a president should be. Moreover, Mr. Clinton's apparent impulse to try to talk his way out of difficult situations, to equivocate and be less than fully candid when he feels pressed, could yet erode public confidence in his trustworthiness.

Whitewater: The Arkansas real estate deal involving the first family remains a serious distraction and could become very damaging if the special counsel investigating the matter turns up legal or ethical violations.

So far, a majority of voters apparently have not construed these issues as indicative of Mr. Clinton's fundamental character. Concerned about the economy and their own futures — and predisposed to think well of their president — they have taken him as he presents himself — as an imperfect but well-meaning leader who is determined to confront long-festering national problems.

For his part, the president, in an interview broadcast Friday night on PBS' "Washington Week in Review," said "there is not one single shred of evidence that anybody here has tried to abuse the authority of the presidency to use it for personal gain — not me not any of my top aides."

"There have been no scandals in this administration. And I was governor for 12 years — not a hint of scandal..."

Rep. Patricia Schroeder-D-Colo., who is credited with coining the phrase "Teflon president" to describe Mr. Reagan because negative news seldom stuck to him, describes the Clinton and his top White House aides as "Energizer bunnies," referring to the popular TV commercial character advertising batteries.

"They just pound, pound, and keep right on going," she said. "You can say a lot about this president, but you can't say he's lazy."

Los Angeles Times

U.S., Arab scholars collaborate on new Arabic-language encyclopedia

By Joanne L. Nix
USIA Staff Correspondent

WASHINGTON — Despite the historical and religious significance of Islam in the world, Arabic is the only major language without a comprehensive encyclopedia.

That deficiency will not last much longer, however, as Arab and American scholars are hard at work on producing the first Arabic International Encyclopedia. The 30-volume set, due to be completed in September, is based on the International World Book Encyclopedia. It will cover a variety of subjects but with a special focus on Islamic affairs.

According to Abdul Aziz Al Sweel, assistant cultural attaché of the Saudi Embassy in Washington, more than 3,000 scholars, reviewers and consultants from all over the Arab and Muslim World contributed to the project, which was sponsored and funded by Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz, Saudi Arabia's Minister of Defence and Aviation.

Dr. Al Sweel said the project began in 1990 with a feasibility study conducted by Al Shuaikha Translation and Educational Consultants (STEC), a privately owned Saudi Arabian company. "After nearly three years of research," Dr. Al Sweel said, "STEC concluded that because Arabic is widely used throughout the world, an Arabic-language encyclopedia could become a vital part of Arab and Muslim culture."

After examining several English-language encyclopedias, a STEC team of experts determined that the 1992 international edition of World Book Encyclopedia was best suited to translation into Arabic. The American-published World Book Encyclopedia, which has a recognised appeal to both adults and children, is compiled annually by more than a thousand scholars.

Dr. Al Sweel said that since the encyclopedia is intended for use by Arabic-speaking people throughout the world, the translators have standardised terms and eliminated idioms. "The entire work (is) in classical Arabic, and articles and illustrations were added which pertain to Arab and Muslim readers," said Dr. Al Sweel. Additional space was allocated for more biographies of Muslim leaders as well as the geography, history, politics, sociology and literature of Arab and Muslim countries.

George Ferguson, a World Book representative who worked directly with Arab scholars on the encyclopedia project, said the Arabic International Encyclopedia will be updated periodically to incorporate new developments in the Muslim World. He pointed out that since it's first volume in 1917, the English-language World Book has been reviewed, updated and printed annually.

Mr. Ferguson said that during the preparation of the Arabic International Encyclopedia, a number of scholars reviewed the World Book material and edited or removed items that had no relevance to the Arabic-language audience. "The issues we faced — editorial content, copyrights, distribution and finance — were no different than any other project," he said.

The completed volumes will contain 15,000 pages with 25,000 colour illustrations of highly academic information — features that, according to Mr. Ferguson, make the product "revolutionary."

The international edition of World Book was first published in 1992 for marketing in countries such as Mexico, Egypt, India, South Africa, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan — i.e., countries outside North America where English is the primary or a major secondary language.

The 22-volume, 12,000 page international edition is revised and reedited annually to retain a world view in text and illustrations. For the 1993 edition, more than 40 new articles and 2,000 partially revised entries were introduced relating chiefly to the people, history and local interests of the main readership countries. The works contain more than 27,000 illustrations and 1,900 maps.

A major part of the revision programme covers the 12 new countries which arose following the disintegration of the Soviet Union. And the continuing turmoil in former Yugoslavia led to much revision and new articles on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia.

The Arabic International Encyclopedia will be distributed throughout the Middle East and in countries with large numbers of Muslims, such as Indonesia, and in Africa.

By Rami G. Khouri
Special to the Jordan Times

IF YOU drive by Tell Nimrin in South Shomreh village in the Jordan Valley, which you have probably done many times, you are unlikely to recognise it as anything more than another large mound of dirt similar to thousands of others like it throughout the country. Archaeological excavations at the site by a joint Jordanian-American team have revealed, however, that this is no ordinary mound.

For hidden beneath the unexcavated exterior of Tell Nimrin is an extraordinary layer-cake of successive village and town civilisations that have flourished in the Jordan Valley for nearly four thousand years. The available evidence now confirms that, except for a period of several hundred years when the site appears to have been abandoned in the Late Bronze Age (around 1500-1200 BC), Tell Nimrin seems to have been continuously inhabited for the past four millennia, from the Middle Bronze Age until today.

Judging from the ancient remains that have been excavated, including architectural walls, tools, pottery and thousands of seeds and other agricultural remains, the nature of the settlement at Tell Nimrin does not seem to have changed very much over this long span of time. It is predominantly an agricultural settlement today, and has been since the first time people built houses and lived there on a permanent basis at the start of the Middle Bronze Age (around 1900 BC).

The site of Tell Nimrin has been excavated since 1989 by a team headed jointly by David McCreery of Willamette University (Oregon, USA), James Flanagan of Case Western Reserve University (Ohio, USA) and Khaled Yassine of the University of Jordan. The excavation have been sponsored and funded by the co-directors' home institutions, with additional funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the H.M. O'Neill Charitable Trust (Cleveland), the S.H. and Helen Scheuer Family Foundation (New York), the Catholic Biblical Association (Washington), the Atkinson Foundation (Willamette) and the Kyle-Kelso Foundation (Pittsburgh).

The north-western corner of the site was quickly excavated in the early 1980s by a team headed by Father Michele Piroli of the Franciscan Archaeological Mission to Jordan, after bulldozer cuts for the new road revealed a building with mosaics. Those excavations uncovered a 6th century AD Byzantine church that remained in use for some two centuries, well into the early Islamic Umayyad era. The church was built by the inhabitants of the town known as Bethmaras, which was mentioned in the writings of 4th Century AD Byzantine writers.

The third season of excavations in 1993 confirmed the long occupational history of the site, which is one of the main interests of the archaeologists.

"With such a long span of almost continuous human occupation of the same site," Dr. McCreery told the Jordan Times in a recent interview at Tell Nimrin, "we have a good opportunity to document how people and cultures changed — or perhaps did not change so much — over time. This is a very valuable opportunity to examine the physical remains, architectural structures and cultural practices of successive civilisations living on the same spot, and probably doing the same things in economic terms, over a period of 4,000 years.

Dr. Yassine adds that changing land use patterns over time are also a valuable source of information for archaeologists, historians and modern development planners alike.



Excavations reveal 4,000 years of settled community activity at Tell Nimrin

"If we compare how different cultures used the same land over such a long span of time, we might get useful information about optimum land use today and in the future, especially in terms of agricultural production," he says.

Ironically, the road construction that sliced through the very northern edge of the site also revealed its importance. At the point of the bulldozer cuts, the archaeologists have been able to reveal over 12 metres of ancient occupational remains, including standing walls and intact floors.

Because the site is almost the same altitude as the nearby famous archaeological mound at Jericho, the excavators expected to find Neolithic/Chalcolithic remains (8500-3300 BC), but none have been identified to date at Tell Nimrin. The earliest evidence of human activity are a few scattered pottery sherds from the Early Bronze Age IV period (around 23000-2000 BC). These were found on the surface of alluvial gravels that are typical of the alluvial fans in the Jordan Valley, at points where side wadis spill onto the valley floor. These earliest sherds

may have been from pottery used by people who passed through the area or stopped there, perhaps to use an ancient spring or to draw water from the Wadi Shueib which runs right past the site.

The historical gap in occupation at Tell Nimrin occurs just after this period, when the site seems to have been abandoned throughout the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age (1500-1100 BC) — for reasons that are not yet known, but could relate to regional insecurity, environmental changes or economic stress.

The next period of occupation is in the early Iron Age, in the 10th Century BC, when villagers built stone and mudbrick houses and engaged in extensive agricultural work. One room dating from the late 10th Century BC (950-925 BC) was clearly used to store agricultural produce, as evidenced by rich botanical remains such as barley, wheat, lentils, chickpeas and other produce. Stone walls uncovered at the northern edge of the site may have been part of the casemate defensive system of the village, which appears to have been destroyed at the end of the Iron I period (one theory suggests this destruc-

tion was at the hands of an invading Egyptian Pharaoh, perhaps around 918 BC)

There is evidence for continuous occupation of the site throughout the Iron Age, from around 1000 BC to the start of the Persian Period (530-332 BC). Many walls and associated surfaces, tabuns, storage pits and other remains indicate that a succession of agricultural cultures lived in permanent villages at Tell Nimrin; in some periods (such as the 8th Century), the site may only have supported a squat occupation or an open-type tent settlement with little stone architecture. This is a typical pattern of occupation for the Iron Age throughout the valley, and is documented at other major sites such as Tell Deir Alla and Tell Mazar.

The settlement seems to have been destroyed or abandoned at the end of the 7th century BC, but was inhabited again throughout the entire Persian Period (530-332 BC). Architectural remains have been uncovered from the 6th and 5th centuries, and several ostraca (inscribed pottery sherds) with Aramaic script may indicate the presence of a building that was used as an administrative or commercial centre. Many storage jars in the Persian period, like all other periods at the site, suggest that Tell Nimrin's agricultural importance may have been complemented by its strategic value as a military settlement.

Evidence for occupation during the Hellenistic period comprises only a few pottery sherds, with no architecture from that time yet uncovered. Almost the same situation pertains for the Roman period, which revealed well preserved strata and some remains of architecture, though most of the architecture from the Roman era has been destroyed by modern bulldozing activity.

The Byzantine town is well attested by the church and other wall fragments that sit right on top of the Persian layers. There are also many pits, coins, silos and other elements dating from the Byzantine town. Byzantine coins found at Tell Nimrin were struck during the reigns of the emperors Valens, Valentinius I, Leo, Zeno, Basiliscus and Anastasius, from the mid-4th to the early 6th centuries AD.

On the western edge of the tell the excavators identified Umayyad structures such as water channels, terracing, walls and some sherds. Clearly, at Tell Nimrin as in the rest of Jordan, there was continuity of settlement from the Byzantine to the Umayyad periods. Later Islamic periods are attested by some Abbasid pottery sherds and some Ayyubid-Mamluke structures, terrace walls, sherds and botanical remains.

Israeli troops, settlers kill four

(Continued from page 1)

bad enough already."

Israel released 1,000 Palestinian prisoners this week, hoping to quell the violence and coax the PLO back to the peace talks.

The radical settlers, a minority among the 120,000 Jews living in 144 settlements, have vowed to resist attempts to dislodge them.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres declared Friday: "We shall not hesitate to use measures against anyone who's dangerous."

Syria urges U.N. action

Syria urged the U.N. Security Council Friday to send an international force to protect

Palestinians in the occupied territories.

"Peace in the Middle East could only be achieved by the full withdrawal of Israeli forces and settlers from the occupied Arab lands," a Syrian official said.

"Until the withdrawal is made the Security Council has a duty and responsibility to send an international force to protect the Palestinian people because the Hebron massacre was not the first and will not be the last," he said.

The U.N. Security Council

has so far failed to reach agreement on the wording of a resolution that would condemn

other areas."

"We want the peace process to continue and succeed because this is the only guarantee that we will have real security in the long run," the PLO negotiator said.

Mr. Christopher has tried to persuade Mr. Arafat to accept Mr. Clinton's invitation by telephoning him three times since the mosque attack, heaping praise on the PLO leader and sternly demanding Mr. Arafat act swiftly on measures approved by his cabinet to restrain radical settlers.

Mr. Christopher has also hinted he may support some international presence temporarily in the occupied territories.

"They need to see a different future," Mr. Christopher told congress on Wednesday.

But, above all, Mr. Christopher has insisted that the agreement with Israel to establish self-rule for Palestinians in

Hebron must be completed and implemented in order to create "new realities" in the territories.

That would mean Mr. Arafat accepting Mr. Clinton's invitation and sending negotiators to work with Israel — and deferring some PLO demands to future talks.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said a day earlier that London is willing to contribute civilian observers, but not armed units.

Jibril Rajoub, a top Arafat aide, took an even harder line on Jewish settlements in an interview published in the Hebrew daily *Yedioth Ahronoth* Friday.

Mr. Rajoub, who was expelled from Hebron in 1988 for anti-Israeli activities, said that if Israel did not dismantle all settlements in the occupied territories, "we'll distribute weapons to the Palestinians and return to the armed struggle."

Israel has said it would detain five settlers without trial and disarm fewer than 100.

Israel has said it would consider an international observer force — but not a military force — to supervise its with-

drawal from the occupied lands and the start of self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

On Friday, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said he expected a decision "in due time, under authority of the United Nations," for an observer force.

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These promising developments have prompted some observers to predict peace this year for Bosnia.

But little has been done to address Serb determination to

All four defendants found guilty in blast

(Continued from page 1)

argument and said Mr. Salameh still wanted his representation.

The bombing killed six and injured more than 1,000 in the 110-storey twin towers, the world's second-tallest buildings. Among the dead was a pregnant clerical worker.

The noon-time blast blew a five-storey-deep crater in a garage beneath the trade centre. The 550-kilogrammes of explosives inside a yellow Ryder rental van wrecked the skyscrapers' power and emergency systems.

Tens of thousands of people fled down smoky, dark stairwells in a six-hour evacuation. Seventeen kindergartners spent five hours trapped in an elevator. A pregnant woman was plucked off a rooftop by a helicopter.

Two days later, deep in the rubble, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents found van parts with vehicle identification numbers. That led them to Mr. Salameh, who was arrested March 4 as tried to

recover a \$400 deposit on the rental van.

In all, seven men were charged with conspiracy in the bombing. Bilal Al Kaisi, 28, awaits trial, and Mr. Yousef 26, and another suspect, Abdul Yasin, 33, are fugitives.

In a related case, 15 others are charged with plotting to blow up the United Nations, the federal building housing the FBI and two tunnels and a bridge connecting Manhattan and New Jersey. The trade centre bombing allegedly was part of that conspiracy; the

trial is scheduled for this fall.

One defendant in that case is Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, a blind cleric who allegedly inspired the group with fiery rhetoric he delivered in a storefront mosque in Jersey City. Sheikh Abdul Rahman was acquitted in Egypt of charges that he provoked the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981.

Another defendant is Al Sayid Nossair, who has been jailed for three years on charges related to the killing of radical Rabbi Meir Kahane.

The blast caused an estimated \$50 million in damage and closed the towers for weeks. It also spread fear of recurrences in the United States, fueling a boom in private and public security. A year later, however, many of those measures had eased as the bombing remained an isolated episode.

Prosecutors said all four defendants in the trade centre trial had links to Mr. Nossair.

The trial proceeded slowly at first; even the judge said it was boring.

But there were accounts from survivors of the bombing, and there were some surprises; a Secret Service agent claimed he had seen a yellow van an instant before the explosion.

And prosecution witness Willie Moosh, asked to pick out the men he saw at his gas station with a yellow van the morning of the blast, pointed to two jurors instead. He later said he had made a mistake and pointed to defendants Abu Halima and Mr. Salameh — placing them with the van hours after Mr. Salameh had reported it stolen.

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Shaath: U.S. backs armed presence

(Continued from page 1)

the Israeli government seems extremist and the disarming of some radicals.

Without providing specific examples, Dr. Shaath told reporters: "I hope to accomplish measures that would enhance the security of the Palestinian people after this grisly massacre at Hebron, that will enable us to continue this peace process with success."

He said the PLO was at the point of signing an agreement with Israel to bring self-rule to Palestinians in Jericho and Gaza before the Hebron incident. But, above all, Mr. Christopher has insisted that the agreement with Israel to establish self-rule for Palestinians in

the former Yugoslavia is being stifled because the United Nations has not yet voted its budget, the mayor of Sarajevo said Friday.

"It should have started some time ago," said Mohammad Kresevjakovic, the mayor of the besieged Bosnian city.

"If the same effort had been made to find money for the tribunal as had been made to buy weapons, we would already have the richest war crimes court ever," he told a news conference in Rome where he held talks with Italian

government officials.



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ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (26/02/1994 - 02/03/1994)

WEEKLY REPORT

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME	PRI. OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE	VOLUME
	JD	JD	JD	JD
ABAD BANK	285,492	183,000	192,000	152,000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	151,932	7,300	7,350	7,320
BANK OF JORDAN	70,218	59,000	60,000	57,000
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK, THE JORDAN DEVELOPMENT BANK	14,798	4,750	4,750	4,720
JORDAN FINANCIAL BANK	17,745	2,150	2,150	2,240
JORDAN GULF BANK	129,540	3,500	3,500	3,500
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	77,752	6,350	6,340	6,300
UNION BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT	378,848	3,200	3,200	3,340
BONIFIS BANK	522,176	7,160	7,170	7,210
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	555,538	4,200	4,200	4,420
ARMED FORCES BANK	72,000	5,110	5,120	5,200
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	76,734	4,350	4,350	4,250
ARMED FORCES BANK	64,492	4,640	4,640	4,700
ARMED FORCES BANK	1,247,044	2,060	2,060	2,050
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	7,334	4,860	4,860	4,860
JORDAN INSURANCE	73,262	2,300	2,300	2,440
JORDAN SEAS INSURANCE	3,240	2,000	2,000	2,000
JORDAN PENSION INSURANCE	6,240	7,600	7,600	7,620
UNIVERSAL INSURANCE	21,000	3,750	3,750	3,750
ARM LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	59,064	3,700	3,700	3,700
JORDANIAN AIRLINES INSURANCE	6,090	2,970	2,950	2,900
IRIDI DISTRICT ELECTRICITY	856,940	4,850	4,800	4,800
VEHICLES OWNERS INSURANCE	1,214	2,370	2,350	2,340
JORDAN NATIONAL HOTELS	4,350	7,500	7,500	7,550
JORDAN NATIONAL HOTELS	39,383	4,850	4,850	4,860
JORDAN TOURISM & SPA COMPLEX	18,072	2,400	2,420	2,430
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO GENERALISATION	71,232	3,750	3,750	3,750
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	166,045	4,500	4,420	4,530
JORDAN EQUIP. RENTING & MAINTENANCE	34,645	1,700	1,700	1,740
JORDAN PRESS FOUNDATION / ALRA'A	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
UNITED INDUSTRIES FOR INVESTMENT	17,665	12,700	12,700	12,600
ARMAS INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	64,459	14,710	14,900	14,800
ATTACHEE COMPT. MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	1,200	2,100	2,100	2,100
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	384,927	1,750	1,750	1,800
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	20,777	1,670	1,670	1,680
JORDAN TAPING	422,335	3,150	3,150	3,120
JORDAN INDUSTRIES	40,297	18,400	18,390	18,290
THE JORDAN COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	988	7,820	7,820	7,820
THE JORDAN WOOLST MILLS	745	2,150	2,150	2,130
ARMAS PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	55,740	2,100	2,100	2,100
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	436,193	12,500	12,500	12,500
JORDAN DAIRY	22,928	0,360	0,350	0,360
THE JORDAN PIPE MANUFACTURING	37,918	6,450	6,400	6,720
JORDAN PAPER & CARDBOARD FACTORIES	5,792	3,200	3,200	3,200
THE PUBLIC MINING	533,875	4,400	4,500	4,500
JORDAN PETROCHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	5,728	2,900	2,940	3,050
SPINNING & WEAVING	5,270	2,100	2,100	2,100
RAPIA INDUSTRIES	12,958	2,770	2,740	2,780
JORDAN GLASS INDUSTRIES	127,452	3,140	3,070	3,090
ARMAS INDUSTRIES & INVESTMENT	12,293	12,500	12,500	12,500
ARMAS ALUMINUM INDUSTRIES	7,774	12,200	12,200	12,200
ARMAS PAPER CONSTRUCTING & TRADING	12,413	10,100	10,100	10,100
ARMAS CONSTRUCTION & CONTRACTING	143,994	10,150	10,100	10,100
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRIES	8,801	1,560	1,530	1,530
INTERMEDIATE PHAR-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	4,104	1,500	1,500	1,520
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	144,254	3,300	3,370	3,390
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	530	5,300	5,300	5,300
ALADIN INDUSTRIES	99,150	2,100	2,100	2,100
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MANUFACTURERS	13,148	2,100	2,000	2,000
ARMAS ALUMINUM INDUSTRIES	4,600	4,600	4,600	4,600
ARMAS CONSTRUCTION & CONTRACTING	17,161	1,370	1,360	1,370
JORDAN WOOD INDUSTRIES / JIVICO	1,538	5,900	6,150	6,150
JORDAN CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	4,508	7,300	7,320	7,320
ARMAS CHEMICALS & CHEMICALS	5,828	3,200	3,200	3,350
JORDAN KUWAIT CO. FOR AGRI. & FOOD PROD.	12,993	1,250	1,250	1,250
DAKTAN INVESTMENT	4,037	2,450	2,400	2,420
UNIVERSAL HOGG INDUSTRIES	722,303	5,810	5,810	5,910
GRAND TOTAL	11,969,849			

PARALLEL MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (26/02/1994 - 02/03/1994)

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME	PRI. OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE	VOLUME
	JD	JD	JD	JD
CENTRAL GENERAL TRADING & STORAGE	446,449	1,120	1,120	1,120
JORDAN MARKETING CORP.	169,725	0,920	0,920	0,920
MIDDLE EAST FOR DEV'L. TRADE CO. LTD	38,621	1,400	1,400	1,400
ARMAS INDUSTRIES & INVESTMENT HOLDINGS	777	0,870	0,870	0,870
ARMAS INDUSTRIAL SERVICES CO.	52,181	1,100	1,100	1,100
NATIONAL TEXTILE & PLASTICS IND. CO. LTD	129,871	2,720	2,800	2,840
JORDAN METAL CABLE COMPANY	342,816	1,560	1,550	1,550
ARMAS GROUP FOR INDUSTRIES	82,726	2,500	2,500	2,520
SHARJAH INDUSTRIES	37,471	2,200	2,200	2,200
EL-SAYAD READY WEAR MANUFACTURING CO.	23,047	3,212	3,220	3,200
GRAND TOTAL	1,349,454			

Financial Jordan Times
Markets in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets			
Currency	New York Close	Tokyo Close	Date: 3/3/1994
Sterling Pound	1.4964	1.4936	
Deutsche Mark	1.7050	1.7075	
Swiss Franc	1.4310	1.4317	
French Franc	5.8020	5.8135**	
Japanese Yen	104.20	103.92	
European Currency Unit	1.1320	1.1316**	

USD per STD

European Opening at 4:00 a.m. GMT Date: 3/3/1994

Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Dates: 3/3/1994

Currencies 1 MTH 3 MTHS 6 MTHS 12 MTHS

U.S. Dollar 3.3125 3.4575 3.5625 4.0000

Sterling Pound 5.9375 4.9375 5.0000 5.0625

Deutsche Mark 5.8750 5.6875 5.5000 5.3750

Swiss Franc 4.0000 5.9375 5.8125 5.6875

French Franc 6.1875 6.1250 5.9375 5.8125

Japanese Yen 2.1250 2.0625 2.0625 2.1250

European Currency Unit 6.3200 6.1900 6.0800 5.9400

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Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 3/3/1994

Currency Bid Offer

U.S. Dollar 0.6980 0.7000

Sterling Pound 1.0419 1.0471

Deutsche Mark 0.4086 0.4106

Swiss Franc 0.4871 0.4985

French Franc 0.1200 0.1206

Japanese Yen 0.6714 0.6748

Dutch Guilder 0.5640 0.5656

Harding assaulted in park near home

MERTON, Ore. (AP) — American figure skater Nancy Harding was in a city park near apartment complex where she has been staying with police said Friday. She suffered scrapes and a sprained knee in the attack, which about 11 p.m. Thursday said it was possible targeted. Harding told investigators walking from her pickup truck through McMillen the apartment complex man knocked her down behind, police spokesman Hyde said. She then jumped on skates and a struggle ensued between the assailant, who did nothing, fled when activated a personal alarm back to her friends' car, where she called

Meanwhile in Washington, the U.S. Justice Department was Thursday reviewing whether any federal crimes were committed by Harding in the attack on her competitor, Nancy Kerrigan.

The review is still underway," said John Russel, spokesman for the Justice Department's Criminal Division. He said the review was undertaken at the request, about two weeks ago, of local prosecutors in Portland, Oregon, Harding's home.

Federal officials are studying whether Harding may have violated the Hobbs act, which makes it a felony to interfere or conspire to interfere with commerce by use of violence or the threat of it, Russell said. The act carries a penalty of up to 20 years in prison.

Criminal division attorneys are "very skeptical" that a Hobbs act prosecution can be brought, according to a federal official.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIA HIRSCH
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CARPE DIEM

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
4 7 6 5 2
5 K 10 7
A J 10
* K Q

EAST
Void * K 10 3
J 8 2
8 6 5 3
P J 10 9 6 4 5 3 2

SOUTH
A Q 9 8 4
5 A Q 6
9 4 2
* A 7

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 3 ♦ Pass
4 ♦ Pass 4 ♦ Pass
4 ♣ Pass 6 ♣ Pass
Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♣

"Be Prepared," the motto of the Boy Scouts, also could serve as the watchword for defenders. Chance to direct the attack come seldom and you cannot afford to let them slip by.

Since there could possibly be two fast diamond losers on the hand, South decided to investigate slam possibilities with a cue-bidding sequence. That presented East with

the opportunity to double four diamonds as a lead-director, an advantage that went a long way. As a result, when North contracted for six spades, West was on lead with no information from partner as a guide, in particular that a diamond lead was vital to defeat the contract.

West's opening salvo of a club was surely blamed and declarer made the most of his privilege. The first trick was won in diamonds and declarer made the correct technical play of the jack of spades, covered by the king and taken with the ace. West's failure to follow was a just reward for careful play. Declarer crossed to the king of hearts and took the marked finesse for the ten of spades.

After drawing the last trump, declarer cashed the groundworks for an endplay by clearing hearts and clubs from both the table and the closed hand. Then a diamond was led and the ten was finessed. In with the queen, East had a choice of losing options. A diamond into the board's tenace would solve declarer's problem in that suit; a heart or a club would permit declarer to ruff in one hand while discarding a diamond from the other. No matter what the slam was in the bag,

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Show: 12:30, 3, 8:30, 10:30

**ROUND TRIP
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PLAZA

CONCORD

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FILOFAX**

Cinema

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PASSENGER**

Show: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

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A political comedy
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Nabil Al Mashini Theatre
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**A popular political comedy
Actors: Abeer Issa, Daoud Jalajel,
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in addition to other comedians**

**Every night at 8:15
Tickets are sold all day**

Coming soon: The next play

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**Nabil & Hisham Theatre
presents**

**Asian Arab Summit Conference
(play)**

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Theatre is closed Sundays, Monday
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Auriol chases Kankkunen in Portuguese Rally

INDIAN WELLS, Calif. (AP) — Third-seeded Stefan Edberg of Sweden advanced to the quarterfinals of the Champions Cup Thursday, but No. 6 Michael Chang and No. 7 Todd Martin were both upset victims.

Edberg needed only 68 minutes to eliminate Fabrice Santoro of France 6-2, 6-3. A day earlier, Santoro beat Andre Agassi, who was playing in only his second tournament in the last five months.

Edberg lost to No. 12 Alexander Volkov of Russia 6-4, 1-6, 6-3. Martin, who reached the finals of the Australian Open in January, was beaten by No. 10 Petr Korda of the Czech Republic 6-4, 3-6, 6-2. In other third-round action, eighth-seeded Thomas Muster

felt so well because he was so wet," Volkov said after scoring his upset, referring to the fact that Chang was soaked with sweat.

"I played so well in the first set," Volkov said. "I didn't make any mistakes. Michael did not play very well today. He playing defensive, he made too many mistakes. I felt confident, I hit short balls and won a lot of points."

Chang said the two-hour, nine-minute match was "a little strange."

"I was a little bit flat," Chang said. "I made a few unforced errors that really hurt me. I've had success against Alexander in the past. He was not only hitting winners. I was making errors, so it was tough to beat him."

'Soccer more popular in U.S. than polls show'

WASHINGTON (UPI) — A spokesman for the U.S. World Cup organising committee rejects public opinion polls on soccer's purported unpopularity in the United States, arguing instead that American sports fans have already demonstrated their support for the game.

Teddy Roe, speaking last week on a WorldNet television dialogue programme with participants in Algiers, called soccer's popularity in the U.S. "hidden." In fact, Roe asserted, soccer is the fastest-growing youth sport in this country, with more than 15 million active participants. Since the 1970s, he said, the game has been growing, starting in the public schools and in youth leagues. Speaking from personal experience, Roe said the youth league player of today will be the father of his own soccer player tomorrow.

The 1994 Portugal Rally has seen favoured drivers drop-out early. Scotland's Colin McRae Thursday abandoned the race after his Subaru Impreza 555 stalled on the steep mid-country hills.

where the tournament will be played, sold out last June — a year before the World Cup begins — according to Roe.

Even after all the seats were sold, Roe said Americans are still clamouring for tickets. Even more remarkable, fans bought their tickets without knowing which countries would qualify teams for the World Cup or in which cities the teams would play.

Roe discounted polls reporting that only 20 per cent of Americans know the World Cup will be played in the United States, and that only 18 per cent know it will be played this year. He called those polls not "particularly accurate."

Once sponsors start promoting the World Cup on American television, he said, "there's no question in my mind that everybody in the United States will know the World Cup is

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VACANCY

The U.S. Embassy in Amman has a vacancy for a Cultural Affairs Assistant in the American Center to implement cultural programs. Applicants must have a university degree in liberal arts, education or a relevant field; must have fluent English and Arabic. Must have two years experience and a good working knowledge of the Jordanian political, economic, social, artistic and educational structure. Administrative ability to carry out detailed cultural programs, drafting and word processing required. Designing publications and/or desk top publishing experience desirable. Qualified applicants should submit an application (available at Embassy gate) to the Personnel Officer prior to March 17, 1994.

Open From 8:00 Am To 9:00 Pm

NOTICE OF SALE

Date: Tuesday, March 8, 1994, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Location: Warehouse near 7th Circle.

Items to be sold: Used residential and office furnishings and equipment.

Type of sale: Sealed-bid. Bid forms can be obtained on the day of sale.

Conditions of sale:

- 20 per cent cash deposit required on the day.

- Sale items will be available for inspection on the day.

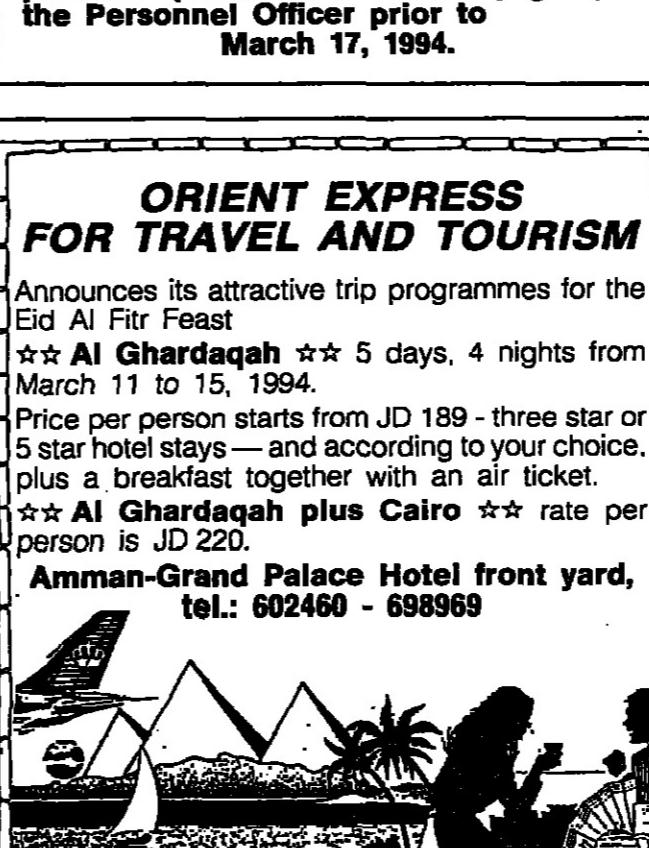
- Bids must be submitted by 1:00 p.m. on the sale day.

- Bids must be submitted at the warehouse.

- Bids will be opened and bidders notified beginning Wednesday, March 9, 1994.

- Items must be removed within 24 hours after notification. After that period, a 50 JD per day storage fee will be assessed.

- All items are sold on a "where-as-is, non-returnable" basis.



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A popular political comedy
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq: U.S. will pay for hostile stand

BAGHDAD (R) — Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz said on Friday the United States will pay for its insistence to keep U.N. sanctions against Iraq. In a statement to the Iraqi News Agency (INA), Mr. Aziz warned President Bill Clinton that his advisers were pushing "U.S. policy in the region into a dead end." He said: "The notorious advisers of the American president... who prevent the Security Council from honouring its commitments towards Iraq will reap the results of their shallow and rancorous attitudes." President Clinton said on Thursday the United States would continue to apply economic sanctions against Iraq because of Baghdad's defiance of United Nations resolutions passed after the 1991 Gulf war. "Because of Iraq's failure to comply fully with United Nations Security Council resolutions, the United States will continue to apply economic sanctions to deter Iraq from threatening peace and stability in the region." Mr. Clinton said in a report to Congress. Iraq is under stringent U.N. trade sanctions imposed in response to its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. "The trend to keep sanctions on Iraq was not only unfair and hostile but wrong and will not realize for the planners of U.S. policy their declared aims," Mr. Aziz said. Mr. Aziz said Iraq had honoured all its ceasefire commitments and the Security Council was now obliged to lift the oil embargo "without delay and (addition) of new conditions."

U.S.: No plan to deport Demjanjuk

CINCINNATI (AP) — The U.S. government said it has no plan for an immediate effort to deport accused Nazi guard John Demjanjuk, even though a court order blocking deportation has expired. The department is still fighting a case against Mr. Demjanjuk in a Cleveland federal court and may take another aspect of the dispute to the U.S. Supreme Court. But it will not try to have Mr. Demjanjuk deported while the cases are pending, spokesman Carl Stern said Thursday from Washington. Mr. Demjanjuk was convicted in 1988 and sentenced to death in Israel on charges he was a Nazi guard in Poland during World War II. The Israeli supreme court overturned that conviction in July allowing Mr. Demjanjuk, 73, a retired autoworker from suburban Cleveland, to return to the United States in September. The 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled Nov. 17 that the U.S. Justice Department defrauded the federal courts by not disclosing evidence Mr. Demjanjuk could have used to fight his 1986 extradition to Israel. The court last week refused to rehear the ruling. The Justice Department has 90 days to appeal to the supreme court but it has not made that decision. Mr. Stern said.

Colombian rebels free American

BOGOTA (AP) — An American freed by leftist rebels stepped off an airplane after a flight from the jungle region where he had been held for a year, and ran into the arms of his brother, Lewis Manning, freed Wednesday by National Liberation Army rebels in Choco state, 300 kilometres west of Bogota, hugged his brother, Bob Manning, colleagues and other friends at Bogota's airport on Thursday. The rebel group, known by its initials in Spanish as the ELN, threatened to abduct more Americans as "prisoners of war," for ransom. Its message was conveyed in faxes to local news media this week. The National Liberation Army and a loosely allied group have recently stepped up attacks on American interests, bombing three Mormon churches, a Coca-Cola bottling plant and U.S. bank branches.

Rock star reported in coma after overdose

ROME (AP) — Kurt Cobain, lead singer of the rock group Nirvana, was hospitalised in a coma Friday after taking an overdose of tranquillisers with champagne, the Italian news agency ANSA said. The hospital refused to confirm that Mr. Cobain was in a coma, and said only that he had been transferred to a private clinic after initial emergency room treatment. ANSA said the 28-year Cobain was stricken after taking a huge dose of rohypnol, a tranquiliser, with champagne. Police said he was taken to the public Polyclinic Hospital around 7 a.m. and transferred to an unidentified private clinic five hours later. The leader of the Seattle Grunge rock group was reportedly on vacation in Rome with his wife, singer Courtney Love, between European engagements.

Ransom named U.S. envoy to Bahrain

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bill Clinton has nominated David M. Ransom, a veteran foreign service officer, to be U.S. ambassador to Bahrain. In a State Department career which began in 1965, Mr. Ransom has served as desk officer for Southern Europe and for the Arabian Peninsula. Among numerous other posts, he was deputy chief of mission at the U.S. embassy in the United Arab Emirates. He also served in the U.S. embassy in Damascus.

Prosecution helped acquit Davidians

WACO (AP) — Testimony from the Branch Davidian who was the government's key witness helped jurors decide to acquit 11 cult members of murder, the jury forewoman has told the Waco (Texas) Tribune-Herald. The testimony of Kathryn Schroeder and two other followers of doomsday prophet David Koresh carried the most weight in helping the panel decide the 11 cultists were not guilty of murdering four agents during a Feb. 28, 1993, shootout, said Sarah L. N. Mrs. Schroeder also had been charged with murder but did not testify in exchange for admitting to the lesser crime of resisting federal officers. Victoria Hollingsworth Marjorie Thomas, two others inside the compound during the shootout, also testified for the prosecution. Ms. Hollingsworth and Ms. Thomas were never charged. "The ones that caused the most impact were probably those who had been in the pound," Ms. Bain was quoted in Thursday's Tribune-Herald. "Their testimony also was kind of damaging on some of the sole charges, some of the firearms charges and actual parts on during the raid itself, what various individuals had done during the raid itself," said Ms. Bain, a high school Spanish teacher. The jury on Saturday acquitted all 11 and an 18-year-old Briton, a Canadian, a Jamaican and an Iranian, of murder and conspiracy to commit voluntary manslaughter, which carries a maximum 10-year prison term. Two others were convicted of weapons charges.

Man accused in porno movie fire

LONDON (A) — A man charged with murdering nine patrons of a pornographic movie club by setting fire to the building was remanded in custody by a court Thursday to await trial. David Lauers, 34, who is deaf and works as a garment industry worker, is accused of starting Saturday's fire at the Dream City movie club by pouring gasoline through a mail slot and setting alight. Flames swept through the seedy, four-storey Victorian building near London's financial district, trapping about 30 m. patrons. Police said they had been watching pornographic movies. Press reports said homosexuals and heterosexuals frequented the club. No motive for the alleged attack was given at Thursday's brief hearing at Highbury corner magistrate's court in North London and no trial date was announced. It was the largest death toll from a fire in the capital since the fire at King's Cross subway station in November 1987 that killed 31 people.

Turks protest Hebron mosque killings

ISTANBUL (R) — About 1,000 Muslims leaving Friday prayers in central Istanbul buried the American flag and chanted anti-Israeli slogans to protest the killing of more than 60 Muslim worshippers in the occupied West Bank a week ago. There were no reports of injuries or arrests.

Officials, community leaders welcome Jordan-Vatican ties

By Nermene Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and the Jordanian Catholic community welcomed the long expected announcement of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the Vatican and the Kingdom.

Information Minister Jawad Anani said that Jordan believes that this move "will contribute towards the establishment of just and durable peace in the Middle East in a manner which would guarantee the human rights called for by the monotheistic religions."

"We welcome this step, especially that the Vatican represents most Christians of the world," Dr. Anani said in a telephone interview with the Jordan Times.

Catholic community leader Bishop Salim Sayegh received "with pride and pleasure" the Vatican's decision to exchange ambassadors with Jordan.

In a telephone interview, Bishop Sayegh said he was officially informed of the Vatican's long awaited decision Thursday morning.

"We are very proud and happy," the Bishop said, adding that his happiness is accentuated by the fact that "I am a Christian heading the Catholic community here and that I am Jordanian."

"This diplomatic representation between Jordan and the Vatican has been our wish for a long time, especially that there are no problems between the regime" — and the Catholic

community," Bishop Sayegh said.

He also said that the Catholic community in the Kingdom has been "expecting the news for months now."

A spokesman at the Italian embassy here said expectations were that diplomatic relations would be established between the Kingdom and the Vatican immediately after the Vatican announced that it would establish relations with Israel.

The Vatican and Israel recognised each other in December and Israeli leaders have invited the pope to visit the Jewish state whenever he wanted.

The spokesman said all the negotiations for the establishment of diplomatic ties were conducted in Rome between the Kingdom's ambassador there and Vatican officials.

This move comes at the heels of an announcement by Pope John Paul in January that before the year 2000 he wanted to visit the principal holy sites of the Old and New Testaments, a trip which could include Israel, Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Turkey.

The Pope is due next month to visit Lebanon, recovering from a devastating 15-year civil war between Christians and Muslims.

The Kingdom already has an Apostolic delegation and headquarters in Amman, which Bishop Sayegh believed will become the Vatican embassy. He had no details on other details and arrangements.

Abul Abbas vows to avenge massacre

AMMAN (AP) — Palestinian leader Mohammad Abbas, in comments published Friday, vowed to avenge the recent slaying of Muslim worshippers in the Israeli-occupied West Bank town of Hebron.

In an interview with Jordan's Arabic-language daily Al Dustour newspaper, Mr. Abbas refused to denounce the attack led to a suspension of an 18-month American dialogue with the PLO. Mr. Abbas was a member of the organisation's Executive Committee.

The dialogue was resumed along with the signing of the Sept. 13 Israel-PLO peace accord.

In the interview, Abul Abbas chastised Mr. Arafat for his quest for a negotiated settlement with Israel and urged him to withdraw from the 28-month-old U.S.-backed Middle East peace process.

"These negotiations will only bring shame upon the Palestinian people," he said. "We are pained with the political performance of the Palestinian leadership."

"I advise the PLO to depart from the swamp which it fell in without hesitation and before a tragedy takes place," Abul Abbas warned.

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He said that "armed struggle is the only option" for the Palestinians to liberate the West Bank and Gaza.

Abul Abbas is accused of masterminding the 1984 hijack of an Italian cruiser, Achille Lauro. An American passenger was killed in the hijack. The PLF is on the U.S. wanted

list.

An Italian court found Abul Abbas guilty of the hijack. Some of the hijackers were jailed, but Abul Abbas avoided capture.

The PLF was also responsible for an aborted attack on a Tel Aviv beach in May 1990.

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Faisal-Kreisha row set a precedent for not setting a precedent, observers assert

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The recent public row between Lower House of Parliament members Toujan Faisal and Jamal Kreisha has raised popular awareness of the value of individual freedoms and rights which are essential to the democratisation of any society. Jordanian political analysts and observers say.

"Precedent-setting measures to protect individual freedoms and rights are a fundamental part of the growth of democracy, and as such, every measure taken to assure the evolution of those rights is a step towards further implementation of the democratic process," said a veteran Jordanian politician commenting on the Faisal-Kreisha dispute.

During the dispute, a result of an argument on the merits of martial law, a series of personal and ethnic slurs, as well as an ashtray were hurled at Ms. Faisal by Mr. Kreisha.

Her fellow deputies, led by Speaker Taher Al Masri, proposed solving the matter



PRINCE VISITS WRITER: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan late Thursday visited prominent Jordanian writer and historian Rox Ben Zaid Al Uzaizi at his house to inquire about his health condition. Prince Hassan conveyed to Mr. Uzaizi, author of many books and a columnist, the greetings of His Majesty King Hussein. Mr. Uzaizi read out a poem (see photo)

welcoming Prince Hassan and voicing pride in the leadership of King Hussein and the Hashemite family. Prince Hassan was accompanied on the visit by Deputy Prime Minister Maan Abu Saqqa. Also Thursday, Prince Hassan hosted an iftar in honour of retired army officers.

Hekmatyar prevents food from entering Kabul

KABUL (AP) — The United Nations tried for a third straight day Friday to send a food convoy into this battered capital, but the prime minister's forces refused to let it pass.

"I'm afraid it will not enter Kabul today," said Sitorios Mousouris, the U.N.'s special representative for Afghanistan. He spoke to the Associated Press from his office in Islamabad, Pakistan.

The convoy, consisting of six trucks with 90 tonnes of food, is parked in Bagrami, 20 kilometres southeast of the Kabul, while the United Nations negotiates with renegade Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

Mr. Hekmatyar had agreed to lift his blockade of Kabul and allow the convoy into the city, where food stocks are running out.

However, his forces made additional demands at the last minute and prevented the convoy from entering the city, said aid officials.

Mr. Hekmatyar imposed the blockade after he and his ally, warlord Rashid Dostum, attacked Kabul on Jan. 1 in a bid to oust President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

They are dependent on handouts from the Red Cross and other aid groups whose supplies have been depleted.

The convoy left Wednesday from the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar on what should have been a one-day journey to Kabul.

However, the trucks have been stopped three times by various factions that control stretches of the highway.

There are about 10 separate factions in the Afghan civil war. In addition, there are

numerous bands of autonomous fighters, each imposing their own laws at gunpoint.

The factions fought in a loose alliance for 13 years before ousting a communist government in April 1992. They have spent the last two years battling each other.

In Geneva, a U.N. spokesman said tens of thousands of refugees who have fled the carnage in Kabul are dicing with death from unexploded mines littering camps near the Pakistani border.

Some have fled Kabul, other have found shelter with relatives or friends. But about 50,000 people are living in mosques, schools and abandoned buildings.

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